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# ON TAP

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## *OC'S HIGH WATER MARK*

Trabuco Canyon Water District's (TCWD) customers may have read an article in the January 17, 2006 *Orange County Register* regarding the "High Water Mark in O.C." The article states that the aquifer is full from last year's rain, and experts say suppliers could save money this year. It also states that the aquifer has been running a serious, drought-driven deficit for the past five years, but it is now considered full – a condition not seen since 1994.

The aquifer being referred to is managed by the Orange County Water District (OCWD) which is located Fountain Valley. The OCWD is responsible for managing the underground water reserves that supply about 500 wells within its boundaries. At the present time about 270,000 acre feet of this water is pumped for use each year. That quantity grows steadily, and projections indicate the demand may reach 450,000 acre feet a year in the next quarter center. (One acre foot of water, which would cover a football field to a depth of twelve inches, would supply two average families for a full year.) Twenty cities and water agencies north of Irvine have rights to this groundwater basin.

TCWD and other South Orange County water agencies and cities have no rights to or capacity in OCWD's groundwater basin. Realistically, the drought is not over for TCWD, and TCWD must continue to import a large portion of your drinking water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Metropolitan's imported water source is mostly Colorado River, with augmentation by the State Water Project from Northern California. The water levels in the Colorado River and its reservoirs remain low.

TCWD has taken measures to decrease the dependency on imported water. The use of reclaimed water has been a very effective strategy. TCWD owns and operates a wastewater treatment facility at the northern portion of Dove Canyon. This facility processes all the sewage produced by the communities surrounding it (Dove Canyon, Robinson Ranch, Trabuco Highlands, Rancho Cielo, Walden, etc.) The wastewater facility can produce an average of 750,000 gallons daily of highly treated reclaimed water. This reclaimed water is then used to irrigate common area slopes for local homeowner associations and the golf course located in Dove Canyon.

In addition to reducing the demand for imported water, the use of reclaimed water benefits both the communities and TCWD. The cost of the reclaimed water in TCWD is less than the cost of the domestic drinking water rate. This permits local homeowner associations to provide lower rates in their respective homeowner dues' structure. TCWD benefits because the reclaimed water is dispersed, allowing the wastewater treatment facility to function without concern of overflowing its reclaimed water reservoir.

During years when measurable rainfall occurs, TCWD is able to operate the two wells it owns. These wells, known as the Rose Canyon Well and Lang Well, are located in the core of Trabuco Canyon. When there is plentiful rainfall, the District-wide demand for domestic water decreases. This is particularly true during the colder months due to reduced residential landscaping demands. During these times, TCWD's wells can supply most of the domestic water demands.

In light of the fact that TCWD cannot access the economical source of water from OCWD's groundwater basin, TCWD has no "high water mark" However TCWD's Board of Directors and staff will continue its proactive water management programs and request that customers conserve our valuable water whenever possible.

**SUGGESTED WEEKLY  
WATERING SCHEDULE  
FEBRUARY AND MARCH**

	<b><u>Turf grass</u></b>	<b><u>Trees, shrubs groundcover</u></b>
<b>February</b>	<b>2 days</b>	<b>1 day</b>
	<b>2 cycles of</b>	<b>2 cycles of</b>
	<b>2 minutes</b>	<b>3 minutes</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>3 days</b>	<b>2 days</b>
	<b>2 cycles of</b>	<b>2 cycles of</b>
	<b>3 minutes</b>	<b>3 minutes</b>

Some irrigation controllers have a feature by which the watering time can be set by changing the percentage instead of specifically entering the days, cycles and minutes. If this is the case with your controller, a reduction of 30% should be programmed.

*The Regular Board Meeting is held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the District office located at 3203 Dove Canyon Drive, Trabuco Canyon. The public is encouraged to attend.*

***CONSERVATION  
ENCOURAGEMENT RATE  
PROGRAM***

As the demand for water increases with the growth in Southern California, wise use of water is essential. The Conservation Encouragement

Rate Program (CERP) was approved by the Board of Directors. The CERP is designed to reward wise water users and may possibly result in a rate reduction, while excessive water users will experience an adjustment to their rate similar to that of neighboring water districts.

Within the next few months, the District will have a CERP water calculator on its website (tcwd.ca.gov) to enable customers to calculate what their water costs will be when the CERP is put in place in January of 2007. We will also be providing conservation water saving tips for indoor and outdoor use. The District looks forward to working with its customers in the coming year to stretch our existing water supplies and to avoid purchasing additional capacity in the future. And, don't forget, savings water saves energy and money and it's easy to do!

***BOARD HIGHLIGHTS***

- ◇ January 18, 2006 – Approved the Zone and Area Rates Adjustments effective February 1, 2006.
- ◇ Approved an adjustment to the Capacity Charges.
- ◇ Received a presentation relating to the proposed Dry Season Runoff Water Recovery Project.
- ◇ Adopted the Treasurer's Annual Statement of Investment Policy.
- ◇ Discussed the Zadeh Development Project.

*ON TAP* is published and distributed by TCWD. We welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Please call or write Sharon E. Smith, Editor

TCWD's *ON-TAP*

Trabuco Canyon Water District

32003 Dove Canyon Drive

Trabuco Canyon, CA 92679

(949) 858-0277 (Telephone)

(959) 858-3025 (Facsimile)

[www.tcwd.ca.gov](http://www.tcwd.ca.gov)